CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1   1.   A method comprising:

2   starting a packet timer in response to receipt of a packet, the packet timer having a first

3   threshold;

4   starting an absolute timer in response to receipt of the packet, the absolute timer having a

5   second threshold;

6   restarting the packet timer when another packet is received prior to expiration of the first

7   threshold;

8   asserting an interrupt if the first threshold expires; and

9   asserting the interrupt if the second threshold expires.

1   2.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2   stopping the packet timer when said another packet passes filtering;

3   completing receipt of said another packet; and

4   restarting the packet timer when receipt of said another packet is complete.

1   3.   The method of claim 1, further comprising providing the interrupt, when

2   asserted, to a network driver.

1   4.   A method comprising:

2   starting a packet timer in response to receipt of a packet, the packet timer having a first

3   threshold;

4   starting an absolute timer in response to receipt of the packet, the absolute timer having a

5   second threshold;

6   receiving another packet prior to expiration of the first threshold; and

7   restarting the packet timer.

1   5.   The method of claim 4, further comprising:

2   asserting an interrupt if the first threshold expires; and

3   asserting the interrupt if the second threshold expires.

1   6.   The method of claim 4, further comprising:

2   stopping the packet timer when said another packet passes filtering; and

3   restarting the packet timer when receipt of said another packet is complete.

1   7.   A method comprising:

2   starting a packet timer in response to receipt of a packet, the packet timer having a first

3   threshold;

4   starting an absolute counter in response to receipt of the packet, the absolute counter

5   having a second threshold;

6   restarting the packet timer when another packet is received prior to expiration of the first

7   threshold;

8   asserting an interrupt if the first threshold expires; and

9   asserting the interrupt if the second threshold expires.

1   8.   The method of claim 7, wherein the absolute counter comprises a byte

2   counter, the method further comprising decrementing the byte counter by a number of

3   received bytes when said another packet is received prior to expiration of the first

4   threshold.

1   9.   The method of claim 7, wherein the absolute counter comprises a packet

2   counter, the method further comprising decrementing the packet counter by one packet

3   when said another packet is received prior to expiration of the first threshold.

1   10.   The method of claim 7, further comprising:

2   stopping the packet timer when said another packet passes filtering;

3   completing receipt of said another packet; and

4   restarting the packet timer when receipt of said another packet is complete.

1   11.   The method of claim 7, further comprising providing the interrupt, when

2   asserted, to a network driver.

1   12.   A method comprising:

2   starting a packet timer in response to receipt of a packet, the packet timer having a first

3   threshold;

4   starting an absolute counter in response to receipt of the packet, the absolute counter

5   having a second threshold;

6   receiving another packet prior to expiration of the first threshold; and

7   restarting the packet timer.

1   13.   The method of claim 12, wherein the absolute counter comprises a byte

2   counter, the method further comprising decrementing the byte counter by a number of

3   received bytes.

1   14.   The method of claim 12, wherein the absolute counter comprises a packet

2   counter, the method further comprising decrementing the packet counter by one packet.

1   15.   The method of claim 12, further comprising:

2   asserting an interrupt if the first threshold expires; and

3   asserting the interrupt if the second threshold expires.

1   16.   The method of claim 12, further comprising:

2   stopping the packet timer when said another packet passes filtering; and

3   restarting the packet timer when receipt of said another packet is complete.

1   17.   A network interface comprising:

2   a packet timer having a first threshold, the packet timer started in response to receipt of a

3   packet from a network, the packet timer restarted in response to receipt of another

4   packet prior to expiration of the first threshold;

5   an absolute timer having a second threshold, the absolute timer started in response to

6   receipt of the packet from the network; and

7   a controller to assert an interrupt if the first threshold expires and to assert the interrupt if

8   the second threshold expires.

1   18.   The network interface of claim 17, wherein the packet timer stops when

2   said another packet passes filtering and restarts when receipt of said another packet is

3   complete.

1   19.   The network interface of claim 17, wherein the controller is coupled with

2   a memory having a network driver resident thereon, the controller to provide the interrupt

3   to the network driver.

1   20.   A network interface comprising:

2   a packet timer having a first threshold, the packet timer started in response to receipt of a

3   packet from a network, the packet timer restarted in response to receipt of another

4   packet prior to expiration of the first threshold;

5   an absolute counter having a second threshold, the absolute counter started in response to

6   receipt of the packet from the network; and

7   a controller to assert an interrupt if the first threshold expires and to assert the interrupt if

8   the second threshold expires.

1   21.   The network interface of claim 20, the absolute counter comprising a byte

2   counter, the byte counter decremented by a number of received bytes in response to

3   receipt of said another packet prior to expiration of the first threshold.

1   22.   The network interface of claim 20, the absolute counter comprising a

2   packet counter, the packet counter decremented by one packet in response to receipt of

3   said another packet prior to expiration of the first threshold.

1   23.   The network interface of claim 20, wherein the packet timer stops when

2   said another packet passes filtering and restarts when receipt of said another packet is

3   complete.

1   24.   The network interface of claim 20, wherein the controller is coupled with

2   a memory having a network driver resident thereon, the controller to provide the interrupt

3   to the network driver.

1   25.   A system comprising:

2   a processor coupled with a bus; and

3   a network interface coupled with the bus and further coupled with a network, the network

4   interface including

5   a packet timer having a first threshold, the packet timer started in response to

6   receipt of a packet from a network, the packet timer restarted in response

7   to receipt of another packet prior to expiration of the first threshold;

8   an absolute timer having a second threshold, the absolute timer started in response

9   to receipt of the packet from the network; and

10   a controller to assert an interrupt if the first threshold expires and to assert the

11   interrupt if the second threshold expires.

1   26.   The system of claim 25, further comprising:

2   a main memory coupled with the bus; and

3   a network driver resident in the main memory, the network driver to process the interrupt.

1   27.   The system of claim 25, wherein the packet timer stops when said another

2   packet passes filtering and restarts when receipt of said another packet is complete.

1   28.   The system of claim 25, the network interface comprising a peripheral

2   card.

1   29.   A system comprising:

2   a processor coupled with a bus; and

3   a network interface coupled with the bus and further coupled with a network, the network

4   interface including

5   a packet timer having a first threshold, the packet timer started in response to

6   receipt of a packet from a network, the packet timer restarted in response

7   to receipt of another packet prior to expiration of the first threshold;

8   an absolute counter having a second threshold, the absolute counter started in

9   response to receipt of the packet from the network; and

10   a controller to assert an interrupt if the first threshold expires and to assert the

11   interrupt if the second threshold expires.

1   30.   The system of claim 29, further comprising:

2   a main memory coupled with the bus; and

3   a network driver resident in the main memory, the network driver to process the interrupt.

1   31.   The system of claim 29, the absolute counter comprising a byte counter,

2   the byte counter decremented by a number of received bytes in response to receipt of said

3   another packet prior to expiration of the first threshold.

1   32.   The system of claim 29, the absolute counter comprising a packet counter,

2   the packet counter decremented by one packet in response to receipt of said another

3   packet prior to expiration of the first threshold.

1   33.   The system of claim 29, wherein the packet timer stops when said another

2   packet passes filtering and restarts when receipt of said another packet is complete.

1   34.   The system of claim 29, the network interface comprising a peripheral

2   card.

1   35.   An article of manufacture comprising:

2   a machine accessible medium providing content that, when accessed by a machine,

3   causes the machine to

4   start a packet timer in response to receipt of a packet, the packet timer having a

5   first threshold;

6   start an absolute timer in response to receipt of the packet, the absolute timer

7   having a second threshold;

8   restart the packet timer when another packet is received prior to expiration of the

9   first threshold;

10   assert an interrupt if the first threshold expires; and

11   assert the interrupt if the second threshold expires.

1   36.   The article of manufacture of claim 35, wherein the content, when

2   accessed, further causes the machine to:

3   stop the packet timer when said another packet passes filtering;

4   complete receipt of said another packet; and

5   restart the packet timer when receipt of said another packet is complete.

1   37.   The article of manufacture of claim 35, wherein the content, when

2   accessed, further causes the machine to provide the interrupt, when asserted, to a network

3   driver.

1   38.   An article of manufacture comprising:

2   a machine accessible medium providing content that, when accessed by a machine,

3   causes the machine to

4   start a packet timer in response to receipt of a packet, the packet timer having a

5   first threshold;

6   start an absolute counter in response to receipt of the packet, the absolute counter

7   having a second threshold;

8   restart the packet timer when another packet is received prior to expiration of the

9   first threshold;

10   assert an interrupt if the first threshold expires; and

11   assert the interrupt if the second threshold expires.

1   39.   The article of manufacture of claim 38, the absolute counter comprising a

2   byte counter, wherein the content, when accessed, further causes the machine to

3   decrement the byte counter by a number of received bytes when said another packet is

4   received prior to expiration of the first threshold.

1   40.   The article of manufacture of claim 38, the absolute counter comprising a

2   packet counter, wherein the content, when accessed, further causes the machine to

3   decrement the packet counter by one packet when said another packet is received prior to

4   expiration of the first threshold.

1   41.   The article of manufacture of claim 38, wherein the content, when

2   accessed, further causes the machine to:

3   stop the packet timer when said another packet passes filtering;

4   complete receipt of said another packet; and

5   restart the packet timer when receipt of said another packet is complete.

1   42.   The article of manufacture of claim 38, wherein the content, when

2   accessed, further causes the machine to provide the interrupt, when asserted, to a network

3   driver.